

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for reducing the aerodynamic drag of a bluff-bodied vehicle in a flowstream, the bluff-bodied vehicle of a type having a leading portion and a trailing portion connected to the leading portion with a gap therebetween defining a recirculation zone, comprising:

a baffle assembly adapted to span a width of the gap between the leading and trailing portions so as to impede cross-flow through the gap, the baffle assembly comprising a first vertical panel adapted to be mounted to the leading portion and a second vertical panel adapted to be mounted to the trailing portion, so that said first and second vertical panels are parallel to each other with overlapping planar sections capable of sliding in parallel relative to each other and having means for automatically adjusting the span of the baffle assembly for variations in the gap width when the leading and trailing portions pivot relative to each other.

2. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 1,

wherein the ~~baffle assembly comprises a first vertical panel~~ is adapted to be mounted to a base surface of the leading portion, and a the second vertical panel is adapted to be mounted to a front surface of the trailing portion facing the base surface, ~~with said first and second vertical panels operably connected to each other at a panel-to-panel interface capable of automatically adjusting the position of said vertical panels relative to each other.~~

3. (original) The apparatus of claim 2,

wherein the first and second vertical panels are adapted to be hinged to the base surface and front surface, respectively.

Claims 4-8 (canceled)

9. (currently amended) An aerodynamic bluff-bodied vehicle comprising:

a leading portion;

a trailing portion connected to the leading portion with a gap therebetween defining a recirculation zone; and

a baffle assembly spanning a width of the gap between the leading and trailing portions to impede cross-flow through the gap, the baffle assembly comprising a first vertical panel mounted to the leading portion and a second

vertical panel mounted to the trailing portion, said first and second vertical panels are parallel to each other with overlapping planar sections capable of sliding in parallel relative to each other and having means for automatically adjusting the span of the baffle assembly for variations in the gap width when the leading and trailing portions pivot relative to each other.

10. (currently amended) The aerodynamic bluff-bodied vehicle of claim 9,

wherein the ~~baffle assembly comprises~~ a first vertical panel is mounted to a base surface of the leading portion, and a the second vertical panel is mounted to a front surface of the trailing portion facing the base surface, ~~with said first and second vertical panels operably connected to each other at a panel to panel interface capable of automatically adjusting the position of said vertical panels relative to each other.~~

11. (original) The aerodynamic bluff-bodied vehicle of claim 10,

wherein the first and second vertical panels are hinged to the base surface and front surface, respectively.

Claims 12-14 (canceled)

15. (original) The aerodynamic bluff-bodied vehicle of claim 9,

wherein the aerodynamic bluff bodied vehicle has a tractor-trailer arrangement with a tractor as the leading portion and a first trailer as the trailing portion.